

GWIB EDUCATION INDUSTRY INITIATIVE

GWIB Education Symposium

Nearly 150 key education leaders and stakeholders met at Anne Arundel Community College on November 1, 2007 for an Education Industry Initiative Symposium. The Symposium was the culmination of a year-long series of meetings of the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB) Education Industry Initiative Steering Committee chaired by Towson President Robert L. Caret. The Steering Committee represents all sectors of education - Pre-K-12, community colleges, business/trade/technical schools, public and private four-year colleges and universities, government agencies and associations.

In preparation for the Symposium, the Steering Committee identified three issues common to all education sectors – Policy, Workforce and Workplace - as well as issues specific to each sector. A summary report of the Steering Committee's preliminary work was distributed for review to education leaders and stakeholders prior to the Symposium.

On November 1, participants were challenged to create solutions and strategies to address the education industry's toughest issues – attracting, recruiting, retaining and creating a pipeline to fill the critical shortages in teaching, administrative, and support staff. Symposium participants divided into two groups representing PreK-12 and Higher Education. They validated their sector's top issues and brainstormed solutions and strategies.

The Steering Committee will publish a final report, including the pre-Symposium summary report and final set of recommendations, in January 2008. A summary of the top-ranked suggestions for each issues group follows.

POLICY: INCENTIVES

The issue of incentives was a priority for both Pre-K and Higher Education. Both groups indicated that financial and career incentive programs were insufficient to attract those interested in pursuing careers in teaching and in higher education. Recommendations included:

- Increase Financial Incentives
- Improve Career Incentives

WORKFORCE: PIPELINE

Both PreK-12 and Higher Education lack a pipeline of qualified candidates to meet the growing teacher shortage, especially those qualified to teach science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses. Both groups listed pipeline as their priority issue. Recommendations included:

- Increase access to programs
- Create more flexibility and financial support for career

WORKPLACE: DIFFERING PRIORITIES

The priority issues in the workplace differed among PreK-12 and Higher Education representatives in ways that were consistent with their distinct cultures and the populations they serve.

STUDENT COMPLEXITY/CLASSROOM COMPLEXITY

For those who worked in the PreK-12 environment, the inclusion in general education classes of students with disabilities as well as non-native English speakers from many different cultures has increased the day to day complexities in the classroom. Recommendations included:

- Alter delivery methods
- Increase professional development opportunities

WORK ENVIRONMENT

For those in Higher Education, several issues that impact work environment were top priorities. Civility issues with younger students and “helicopter parents” have changed the environment on campus, along with campus safety and security challenges. Inadequate staff support, particularly in the areas of technology, STEM and special education are also challenging issues. Recommendations included:

- Create a culture of values and respect
- Create fair human resource/financial policies